

When VEOs make new connections/choices, it may alienate current supporters and suppliers.

161; 124; 125; 162

General Description of the Literature:

It is possible that when VEOs make new friends/connections, it would alienate current supporters and suppliers. This may be especially true if these new linkages lead to changes in the VEO's violent behavior. Anecdotal evidence exists which supports this hypothesis; however, it has not been the subject of empirical investigation. There is both empirical (Naylor, 1993; Berman, 2008) and anecdotal support for the hypothesis that new strategies involving violence may be unacceptable to current suppliers. This support is tempered, however, with literature that suggests the use of violence by extremist organizations may not necessarily alienate supporters (Lake, 2002; Morgan, 2004). However, this proposal of possible non-alienation has not been empirically tested to address the issue of resource suppliers. There is also a great deal of literature documenting the tradeoff from gaining and losing old and new supporters within democratic electoral politics when a party adopts a new ideological position (Downs 1957; Potthoff & Munger, 2005; Berman, 2008; Grofman, 2004). Sawyer (2010) applied this concept to constituent support in a qualitative assessment of Northern Irish Republican VEOs, but this took the form of an underlying assumption rather than an empirical test.

Detailed Analyses

161: *When VEOs make new friends/connections, it may alienate current supporters and suppliers.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: Anecdotally, there is evidence of groups who have made these new connections and concealed it from their existing supporters and suppliers for fear of alienating them. Examples include the concealment by the Official IRA of an arms shipment from the Soviets in 1972 for fear of alienating supporters in the United States (Brady 1999; Hanley and Millar 2009: 188). Similarly, the Provisional IRA strongly denied a link to three members who were caught teaching the FARC advanced bomb-making techniques in Colombia for fear of alienating their American supporters (Sharrock 2004). However, no empirical support for this hypothesis could be found.

Empirical Support Score: 1 = Anecdotal support only for the hypothesis

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: The anecdotal evidence appears to demonstrate that VEOs are sensitive to the potential that revealing controversial friends/connections may be a way to split VEOs from their supporters and suppliers

Applicability Score: Direct: At least some of the empirical results directly concern the context of influencing VEOs

124: *VEOs that move into new strategies may be embarking on new forms of violence that are unacceptable to current resource providers.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: Multiple studies noted that for insurgent and extremist groups receiving resources from outside providers, such as foreign governments, there are strings

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attached which explicitly or implicitly dictate how those resources can be utilized (Naylor 1993; Byman 2005). If these organizations were to then embark upon new strategies (such as new forms of violence) they may lose support from their current resource providers. More anecdotally, VEOs, such as the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) and the Irish People's Liberation Organization (IPLO), lost considerable support from the Republican base after they began associating with drug gangs (Sawyer 2010). Berman (2008) noted that political parties whose ideologies revolve around revolution and radicalism, such as the French Communist Party after World War II, often lose popularity when they are seen as unyielding in the face of shifting and/or improving conditions, and are often forced to become more mainstream or risk losing political support. However, it has been suggested that certain extremist organizations might be more likely to retain support despite the increased use of violence. Due to the fact that the ideologies of certain extremist organizations are so extreme, the support that they receive is likely to come from a fairly small percent of the population (Lake, 2002, p.18). It has been suggested that this minority is unlikely to waiver in their support despite the use of more violent tactics (Morgan, 2004). However, this has not been empirically tested in relation to resource providers.

Empirical Support Score: 3 = Multiple qualitative and/or quantitative studies with mixed results (i.e. some in favor, some against the hypothesis), but more positive than negative findings

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: Direct: At least some of the empirical results directly concern the context of influencing VEOs.

Applicability Score: Direct: At least some of the empirical results directly concern the context of influencing VEOs.

125: *When VEOs change ideological platforms, it may alienate current constituent support base and suppliers*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: This hypothesis draws especially on the vast empirical literature on electoral politics within the Public Choice School. Downsian and Neo-Downsian studies demonstrate that politicians seek to balance their ideological platform so that it is sufficiently differentiated from their opponent's platform while still appealing to the largest number of constituents (Downs 1957). Applying these models to radical groups, radical political parties who wish to enter into or remain in power must often appeal to the majority of voters (Berman, 2008) while VEOs delineate the size of their constituency by the ideology they espouse (Sawyer, 2010). This focus on the majority of voters often shifts the ideological platform away from the more radical extremes (Berman, 2008), which may lead to the alienation of the current constituent support base and suppliers. Berman (2008, p.6) further proposes that this alienation of the current support base and suppliers also occurs due to the funneling of funds and resources away from "revolutionary activities" and towards the more traditional activities and policies that accompany this appeal to the majority of the voting body. In light of the potential consequences of ideological platform shifts of extremist parties, Grofman (2004, p.34) notes that ideologically extreme supporters of a party are more likely to drive the ideological platform upon which that party runs.

Empirical Support Score: 8 = Multiple quantitative analyses supporting the hypothesis

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: Both Berman (2008) and Sawyer (2010) directly address extremism in their articles. Grofman addresses the impacts of extremist ideologies on voting outcomes.

Applicability Score: Direct: At least some of the empirical results directly concern the context of influencing VEOs.

162: *When VEOs change ideological platforms, it may reduce competition within the constituent base.*

Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: In a novel combination of Downsian models and classical economics, Sawyer (2010) highlighted that VEOs may respond to competitive pressures by varying their production of violence and/or their ideological platform. The bulk of Sawyer's qualitative study of Northern Irish Republican VEOs focused on changes in violence production, but two of the main paramilitary organizations desisted from violence entirely as a result of ideological shifts. Similarly, Berman (2008) found radical parties moderation of their ideological platforms to gain additional voters was significantly related to their renunciation of violence. The discussion of the effect of ideological shifts on competition further draws on Public Choice studies of electoral politics. When there is significant uncertainty about the true ideological position of a certain candidate, either due to a shift in ideological platform or to some other reason, voter competition is reduced due to the risk aversion that voters exhibit (Potthoff and Munger 2005). Thus, voters are more likely to support the candidate associated with less uncertainty, despite the fact that the candidate they chose may not be the best representative of their ideological leanings (Potthoff and Munger 2005).

Empirical Support Score: 8 = Multiple quantitative analyses supporting the hypothesis

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: The Berman (2008) and Sawyer (2010) articles directly address violent extremist organizations. The other articles have a broader focus on political behaviors, voter preferences/behaviors, and electoral outcomes. These articles are still applicable to the hypothesis.

Applicability Score: Direct: At least some of the empirical results directly concern the context of influencing VEOs.

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